

## Data Sources Analysis

When possible, cost-benefit analyses should use official data, estimates, and projections. When official data are not used, analyses should explain why official data were not representative of the regulatory target businesses and why the data chosen to be used provided a better measurement. Listed below are several helpful sources of data that can be used in the development of cost-benefit analyses. These sources provide a fairly comprehensive research foundation for agency regulators.

### Where to Start

#### U.S. Census

Begin by reviewing general information sources before assuming that the answers to questions will require significant amounts of research. A good general source of information is from the US Bureau of Census listed below:

- **US Census Website** - <http://www.census.gov/econ/census02/>
- **Census of Population** - This database provides detailed characteristics for the population and housing units in state, counties, cities and towns, giving data by age, sex, race, education, occupations. <http://www.census.gov/popest/estimates.php>
- **Census of Manufacturers** - This database covers all manufacturing establishments, by state and identifies specific manufactured products by NAICS Code. <http://www.census.gov/prod/ec97/97numlist/97numlist.html>
- **Census of Retail and Wholesale Trade** - This database provides information by state, SMSA and non-metropolitan areas for over 100 different types of retail enterprises. Includes data on employment, wages, and receipts. <http://www.census.gov/econ/www/retmenu.html>
- **Census of Service Industries** - This database covers many business and consumer service industries such as engineering firms, hotels, recreation services. Statistics are presented by geographic area and industry. <http://www.census.gov/econ/www/se0200.html>
- **Census of Health and Social Service Assistance** - This database is comprised of establishments providing health care and social assistance for individuals. <http://www.census.gov/epcd/www/97EC62.HTM>
- **Census of Construction Industry** - Tabulates and publishes the dollar value of residential improvement and repair work each quarter. The Census of Construction Industries, taken every five years, provides the most comprehensive overview of the construction industry available. <http://www.census.gov/const/www/#>
- **Census of Agriculture** - These databases provide detailed statistics on farms, farming, ranching and related agricultural activities at the national, state and county level. <http://www.nass.usda.gov/census/> and <http://www.usda.gov/nass/>

- **Small Business Data** - This database provides data on businesses with no paid employees; for example, a "Mom & Pop" corner store or someone operating a business out of their home. <http://www.census.gov/epcd/nonemployer/index.html>
- **American FactFinder** - This database is a source for population, housing, economic and geographic data. [http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?\\_lang=en](http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en)
- **2002 Business Expense Survey** - Provides periodic national estimates on operating expenses for merchant wholesale, retail trade, and selected service industries.: <http://www.census.gov/csd/bes>
- **NAICS – North American Industrial Classification System** - You can obtain data for a specific NAICS industry. You can find data on payroll, establishment, sales receipt, etc. for a specific NAICS industry. <http://www.census.gov/epcd/www/naics.html>
- **Business Help Site** - This US Census site is designed to provide information for businesses to aid completion of surveys and forms. <http://help.econ.census.gov/BHS/ASM/About.html>
- **Wisconsin QuickFacts** - QuickFacts tables are summary profiles showing frequently requested data items from various Census Bureau programs. <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/550001k.html>

## Wisconsin State Data

Another good starting point is the Wisconsin State Data Center. It is composed of two organizations: Demographic Services Center in the Department of Administration (Lead Agency) and the Applied Population Laboratory at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (Coordinating Agency). The two organizations provide census data technical support to a network of 39 affiliates, other governmental agencies, and the general public. Labor and Income Characteristics can be found at: [http://www.doa.state.wi.us/pagesubtext\\_detail.asp?linksubcatid=379](http://www.doa.state.wi.us/pagesubtext_detail.asp?linksubcatid=379).

The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Office of Economic Advisors can be used for official employment and establishment data. The Office assists economic data users to better understand the relationships between labor markets and other economic and demographic specifics. The Office helps users interpret labor force data and focus on the issues and trends influencing employment growth in the State of Wisconsin. Contact the Office of Economic Advisors with specific questions regarding your data analysis needs (<http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/oea>). Listed below are some of the data reports developed by the Office of Economic Advisors.

- **County Workforce Profiles** - Provides snapshots of the labor market in every Wisconsin county - [http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/oea/cp\\_pdf/cp\\_mainx.htm](http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/oea/cp_pdf/cp_mainx.htm)
- **Workforce Development Area Profiles** - Includes analysis of the area's industry and occupation projections, current industry employment and wages, personal income, and current and projected labor force participation of the area's population - [http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/oea/wda/wda\\_profiles.htm](http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/oea/wda/wda_profiles.htm)

- **Geographical Matrix** - Provides a quick view of data sets that are available on similar subjects for cities, counties and regions in Wisconsin. The matrix includes links to data sets for population, employment, largest employers, plant closings, per capita personal income, poverty estimates, wages and more.  
[http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/oea/data\\_geo.htm](http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/oea/data_geo.htm)
- **Top 100 Employers by County and Workforce Development Area** - Establishments and employment ranges included in these lists are based on unemployment insurance payroll tax reports for the quarter that ended December 2004.  
[http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/oea/employer\\_information.htm](http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/oea/employer_information.htm)
- **Employment by Industry Data** -  
[http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/oea/employment\\_by\\_industry.htm](http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/oea/employment_by_industry.htm)
- **Wage Information by Occupation or Industry** –  
<http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/oea/wages.htm>
- **Employment Projections by Region** -  
[http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/oea/employment\\_projections.htm](http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/oea/employment_projections.htm)

## ***State and Federal Tax Data***

Both the Internal Revenue and state tax data is subject to confidentiality restrictions. However, some aggregated data sometimes is available. The Internal Revenue Service has aggregated data on corporate tax returns by SIC-code.

- **Corporation Data by Sector or Industry** -  
<http://www.irs.gov/taxstats/bustaxstats/article/0,,id=96388,00.html>

Various organizations throughout the IRS compile data concerning the number of returns filed. Each year data are published and made available to the public. Much of these data are published by fiscal year, however, historical tax data is also available, as well as projections of returns to be filed in the future.

- **Tax Statistics: Collecting Revenue** -  
<http://www.irs.gov/taxstats/compliancestats/article/0,,id=97168,00.html>

It is important to know that, in some industry categories, tax information is not comprehensive because some industries pay the majority of tax under one section of the tax law while others pay under different sections of the tax law. Also, information is collected by individual payee, and it is not always possible to determine what an industry has paid on purchases as opposed to sales.

The Wisconsin Department of Revenue has economic documents and policy analyses, and informational and statistical reports relating to the Wisconsin economy, Wisconsin's state and local tax system, state aid programs for local governments, and tax relief for individuals. Including the following reports:

- **Manufacturing** - <http://www.dor.state.wi.us/report/m.html#manuf>
- **Economic Development** - <http://www.dor.state.wi.us/report/e.html#dev>

## **Agency-Specific Data Bank**

A number of state and federal agencies collect information on businesses which fall under their regulatory purview. For example, the Department of Regulation and Licensing, manages many state health and business professional licensing programs, has lists of establishment and professionals licensed to operate in Wisconsin. Individual agencies should be contacted on such business specific data. The Licensing and Permitting website at [www.wi.gov](http://www.wi.gov) will provide you with the name of the regulatory agency for a specific type of permit, license or registration.

## **Library Data Resources**

- **The Library of Federal Depository** - Provides access to all Federal documents and reports. The GPOAccess Resources has resources that on business and the economy pertaining to a broad topic area. <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/topics/business.html>
- **ReferenceUSA** - Provides directory information for about 12 million U.S. businesses of all sizes. Search by phone number, address, CEO, estimated sales and much more. You will need to access this information using your library card number. <http://www.scls.lib.wi.us/cgi-bin/auth.cgi?connectto=RU>
- **Librarians** - Nationwide librarians are waiting to answer your questions. They'll chat and visit web pages with you to answer your questions. After your session, you'll receive a complete transcript (if you provide your email address) and you'll immediately see a list of links you visited. <http://www.askaway.info/>

## **Other Data**

- **Thomas Register** is the most comprehensive free resources for industrial information, products, services, CAD drawings, and more. <http://www.thomasnet.com/>
- **Dun & Bradstreet** provides a database that tends to deal with firm-level data and charges a fee for certain downloaded data. D&B tends to focus more on the financial data of a firm and defines firm and establishment in ways different from the Department of Labor and Census Bureau. Find SIC, total employees, legal status, annual US sales dollar equivalent, and more, plus identify up to four (4) executives on the world's largest entities. Free trail reports are available. <http://www.dnbmdd.com/mddi/default.aspx>
- **Industry Association Data** is often collected about their members. This information can be very useful, but should be used with caution due to the fact that industry associations may represent only large firms in an industry. Industry information on costs from these sources should be cross-check with other sources. The *National Trade and Professional Associations* publication available through the Library may be helpful in identifying pertinent trade associations to contact for information. A link to a

list of some of the Wisconsin Trade Associations can be found at:

<http://commerce.wi.gov/BDdocs/BD-SBRRB-BusinessAssociations.pdf>

- **Agricultural Speciality Data** offered by the National Agricultural Statistics Service offers the ability to query by commodity, state(s) and year(s), providing the most up-to-date statistics including all revisions.  
[http://www.nass.usda.gov/Data\\_and\\_Statistics/index.asp](http://www.nass.usda.gov/Data_and_Statistics/index.asp)
- **Healthcare Speciality Data** is available through the National Center for Health Statistics. As the Nation's principal health statistics agency, it compiles statistical information and is a unique public resource for health information.  
<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/about.htm>
- **Transportation Speciality Data** is available through the Bureau of Transportation Statistics. They offer transportation data and information of high quality, and to advance their effective use in both public and private transportation decision-making.  
<http://www.transtats.bts.gov/>
- **Technology Speciality Data** is available through the US Commerce Department and offers the latest reports on technology development.  
[http://www.technology.gov/p\\_Reports.htm](http://www.technology.gov/p_Reports.htm)